

The Allentown hospital: Works of the institution

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THE ALLENTOWN HOSPITAL.

Work of the Institution.—How the Institution Was Started. —Very Capable Managers.

"Felix" in Bethlehem Times.

Among the most beneficent blessings to humanity is a hospital. Nearly all other eleemosynary institutions fade into insignificance before the one whose object is the cure of suffering humanity; the amelioration of bodily ills, if cures are impossible, and the care of the destitute sick. What that grand institution, St. Luke's Hospital, has been and is doing for the Lehigh Valley, the Allentown Hospital is doing for Allentown and the surrounding territory. The hospital was opened on May 22, 1899, and its work since has fully justified its existence. For years there was a more or less spasmodic agitation in favor of a hospital, and it is remarkable, when one takes into consideration what this institution has done, that so strenuous an opposition should always have developed itself whenever the subject of a hospital was broached.

Curious to relate, much of this opposition was indirectly and most innocently caused by St. Luke's Hospital. The latter has many friends in this city, and deservedly so. More than one individual has cause to bless St. Luke's and its staff of skilled physicians and surgeons, and there was somewhat of a feeling that it was kind of treasonable to start a hospital in Allentown when St. Luke's had done so well and deserved every consideration at the hands of Allentownians. It was even argued that ill feeling might arise between the two institutions. As Dr. Estes was one of the guests of honor at the recent graduating exercises of the nurses at our hospital, and Dr. C. D. Schaeffer, the head surgeon of the latter institution, was a member of the examining board of physicians for the post of resident physician of St. Luke's, at least that fear

was groundless. Between the two institutions the utmost friendliness exists. Each has its field of usefulness and labor, and their work does not clash nor their interests collide. The one serious question that always presents itself in all charitable institutions is, how is it going to be supported?

Whenever that question presented itself a faw-away look came into the eyes of the most ardent advocate of the hospital, and it was very evident that that question was a good-sized snag, around which it was decidedly difficult to sail. There was one man whom that question never feased and who always saw the optimistic side of the situation, and that was Rev. Dr. J. A. Singmaster, the first president of the board of trustees of the institution, and one who never wearied in well doing in the cause of the hospital. His answer invariably was: "Start the hospital and the means of support will soon present themselves. Our people are slow to start, but firm in keeping things agoing."

The next bothersome question was: Where are we going to get our patients from? Allentown is a healthy city. Accidents are not very numerous, and those which do happen, why, the victims can be taken as quickly to St. Luke's as to the Allentown Hospital if the latter be erected on the outskirts of the city, as is likely to happen.

The latter was a very poor argument to advance, but it found its believers. The constant dropping of water, however, will wear away the hardest stone, and the persistent work of Dr. Singmaster and several zealous coadjutors had its effect. The property was purchased, a building was erected, and through the effective efforts of Senator Stiles the state lent substantial aid. The hospital was barely erected when patients came flocking in, and people commenced to learn that there was a tremendous amount of sickness, requiring both medical and surgical aid, of which one never heard until it was brought into semi-publicity through this institution. And from that day to this the bugaboo of no patients has disappeared and in its place there arose the complaint of not enough room. - From the very begin-

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